

2010 | 2012
BIENNIAL REPORT



North Carolina Public Schools: **Great Teaching and Learning**



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction



Dear North Carolinians:

Public schools are important to you and to our state. More than 90 percent of the state's children and young people are educated and prepared for careers and college through public schools. Our state's economic success depends on how well we prepare today's youth to become successful, engaged citizens and productive adults. As leaders of the state's public school system, we continually seek to align North Carolina's educational opportunities with future needs.

The past two years have been marked by a combination of economic hardships and exciting opportunities. Public schools, including public charter schools, have embraced many improvements and upgrades while also adapting to cuts in funding and allotments that resulted from the recession that began in 2008. North Carolina is fortunate to be one of only 12 recipients of a competitive federal Race to the Top grant, and this \$400 million grant has helped to keep planned innovations on track for implementation.

The READY initiative includes all of the changes supported with Race to the Top funding, and all of them share one goal: improved teaching and learning. This report summarizes the many improvements that are in place, along with those in development. By the start of the 2014-15 school year, all of our READY initiative goals will be in place. These goals are comprehensive and touch many operations of public schools, including standards for teaching and learning; teacher recruitment, evaluation and support; student assessments; school accountability; technology support and resources to enhance student learning; and intervention with schools that are low performing.

As State Superintendent, I am very pleased with our progress and with the scope of the work ahead. I believe that our work has tremendous potential to remodel our public schools in ways that will help students learn more and achieve higher goals. My targets for my next term are very clear:

- 100 percent high school graduation rate;
- 125,000 Industry-Based Credentials earned by students while in high school;
- 90 percent of Graduates remediation-free upon entry into community colleges or universities; and
- North Carolina as an International Leader in Reading and Mathematics Achievement.

June St. Clair Atkinson

Dr. June Atkinson | State Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction



Dear North Carolinians:

As North Carolina emerges from recent economic changes, the State Board of Education is pleased that our state's public schools continued to move forward. We leveraged our school remodeling plans to win competitive funding; built partnerships with universities, community colleges and other groups; continued our focus on future needs for students; and made historical changes to remodel and improve our schools. This means that our students and their schools are poised to be ready for the challenges and opportunities ahead as economic indicators improve.

The State Board of education's vision for public schools embraces innovation and access to high quality education for all students in each of North Carolina's communities. Our vision, carefully crafted after more than a year of conversations with many stakeholders, emphasizes values that we believe to be shared among our fellow North Carolinians:

- public education as a foundation for democratic institutions and economic prosperity;
- ambitious and evolving educational standards;
- public and individual benefits of educational opportunities;
- the importance of diversity and equal opportunity for all students; and
- a coherent and flexible system to meet the many needs of North Carolina's students.

The State Board of Education's goal is to provide the best opportunities possible for North Carolina's young people. We look forward to working with you and all North Carolinians in this endeavor.

William C. Harrison

Dr. William Harrison | Chairman, State Board of Education

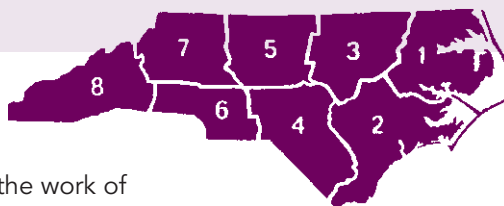
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A special thanks to the following schools featured on the cover:

- Sun Valley Elementary School, Union County Public Schools
- Smithfield-Selma High School, Johnston County Schools

State Board of Education Member Profiles



The North Carolina State Board of Education is a group of citizen-leaders who are responsible for “supervising and administering the free public schools system and the educational funds provided for its support.” The Board sets policy that guides the work of the NC Department of Public Instruction, led by State Superintendent June Atkinson.

Superintendent Atkinson begins her third four-year term as State Superintendent in January 2013 and is the first woman elected by North Carolina voters to serve in that role. Board members also include the Lieutenant Governor, the State Treasurer and 11 other members appointed by the Governor to serve eight-year terms. Eight members represent each of the state’s educational districts, and three are at-large appointees.

The Board’s policies – and the Department of Public Instruction’s activities – touch all aspects of public schooling. These include: educator licensing and evaluation; professional development; curriculum and learning standards for students; student assessments and school accountability; technology and data systems; financial and school business services; facilities, transportation, insurance and child nutrition support; and support to low-performing schools and districts.



William C. Harrison, Ed.D. | Chairman

Member-at-Large | Appointed in March 2009 | Term expired on March 31, 2011

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8th Education District | Appointed in March 2001 | Term expires on March 31, 2017

PO Box 63, Marshall, NC 28753 | 828.649.2144



Jean W. Woolard

1st Education District | Appointed in August 2010 | Term expired on March 31, 2011

6472 NC Highway 32 South, Plymouth, NC 27962 | 252.793.2119



Reginald Kenan

2nd Education District | Appointed in August 2009 | Term expires on March 31, 2017

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Kevin D. Howell

3rd Education District | Appointed in August 2007 | Term expires on March 31, 2015

NC State University External Affairs, Campus Box 7001, Raleigh, NC 27695 | 919.515.9340


Shirley E. Harris

4th Education District | Appointed in May 2005 | Term expires on March 31, 2013

229 Fox Den Road, Troy, NC 27371 | 910.576.3181


Chris Greene

5th Education District | Appointed in June 2009 | Term expires on March 31, 2013

811 Country Club Drive, High Point, NC 27262 | 336.882.3800


John A. Tate, III

6th Education District | Appointed in May 2003 | Term expires on March 31, 2015

1431 Biltmore Drive, Charlotte, NC 28207-2556 | 704.374.6451


Robert Thomas Speed

7th Education District | Appointed in May 2003 | Term expired on March 31, 2011

P.O. Box 432, Boone, NC 28607-0432 | 828.264.1191


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Member-at-Large | Appointed in May 2005 | Term expires on March 31, 2013

304 S. Morgan Street, Roxboro, NC 27573 | 336.599.9088


Patricia (Tricia) N. Willoughby

Member-at-Large | Reappointed to a second term in May 2009 | Term expires on March 31, 2017

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Teacher of the Year Advisors

- **DARCY GRIMES**
2012-13 NC Teacher of the Year
Watauga County Schools | 828.264.7190
175 Pioneer Trail, Boone, NC 28607
- **TYRONNA HOOKER**
2011-12 NC Teacher of the Year
Alamance-Burlington Public Schools | 336.570.6060
1712 Vaughn Road, Burlington, NC 27217

Principal of the Year Advisor

- **PATRICE FAISON**
2012 Wells Fargo NC Principal of the Year
Guilford County Schools | 336.370.8100
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Superintendent Advisor

- **DIANE FROST**
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- **EARLIE COE**
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- **AMBERLY JO PHILLIPS**
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READY is North Carolina's model to improve teaching and learning. It includes new curriculum standards, the Common Core State Standards, new student assessments and school accountability, and the educator evaluation system. All of this will be supported by Home BaseSM, the new technology platform to provide instructional and data collection tools.

Introduction

As new technology and a tough economy have transformed North Carolina, the state's public school system has made sweeping changes of its own.

The instruction that served students well 10 or 20 years ago isn't enough for students today. Now, to be successful in college or a career, they must have technical expertise, greater problem-solving skills and the drive to continue learning wherever their lives may take them.

The READY initiative and the Race to the Top blueprint guide these revolutionary remodeling efforts. This work began in 2008 with the State Board of Education's Framework for Change. A major milestone was reached in August 2012 when several components of this plan were launched for the 2012-13 school year. Comprehensive changes were made to curriculum standards, student assessments, the school accountability model and educator support – all at the same time.

North Carolina schools will always teach the facts that are the foundation for learning, but problem solving, applying facts, decision making, creativity and entrepreneurial skills reinforce those facts. As the remaining pieces of the READY initiative are put in place, educators and students will continue to reach ever-higher goals.

New Curriculum Standards

In August 2012, all state curriculum standards were replaced simultaneously – something that hasn't happened in at least 30 years. These more rigorous standards promote deeper understanding of essential content and skills. They also encourage the blurring of arbitrary divisions between different subjects, allowing for more cohesive, focused learning.

The Common Core State Standards set out what students should be able to know and do in English language arts and mathematics, although their influence is felt in additional subjects such as science and social studies. Created by a state-sponsored effort to develop clear guidelines, these standards have been adopted by North Carolina and more than 40 other states. In all other subject areas, the NC Essential Standards guide teachers and students. These two sets of standards compose North Carolina's new *Standard Course of Study*.

These new standards set fewer, yet clearer and higher expectations for students. Students will dig into subjects in order to gain real understanding of the coursework and practical applications. Correct answers are no longer taken at face value; students must explain how they reached a conclusion and offer alternatives. Writing and technology are integrated across subjects. Benefits of the Common Core include greater portability, important for families who move among districts or states, and the fact that the standards were written by the nation's leaders and best thinkers in mathematics and English language arts.

New Student Assessments

At the end of the school year 2012-13, students will take new assessments that are aligned with the new *Standard Course of Study*. These more rigorous tests will require that students demonstrate thinking and problem-solving skills. Over the next two years, school districts will transition to online assessments. With this innovation, students will eventually spend less time on tests, and teachers will be able to get more detailed information on their students' knowledge. Much more emphasis will be placed on assessment along the way to determine appropriate next steps for learning.

Updated Accountability Model

In fall 2013, the first READY report will show how well schools performed under the new accountability model. The model replaces the ABCs of Public Education and, in accordance with legislation passed by the 2012 NC General Assembly, each school will receive a letter grade.

The accountability model will consider several factors including graduation rates, percentage of students passing higher-level math courses, the ACT College Readiness benchmarks, the percentage of students achieving acceptable levels on the three WorkKeys assessments and student performance on End-of-Grade and End-of Course tests.

A new teacher evaluation model will include student academic growth as one of six standards. Objective measures of student learning are still being developed, but when fully implemented in August 2014, these enhanced evaluations will provide valuable feedback to improve teaching and leadership.



VIDEO GAMES IN CLASS

Lucas Gillispie is on a mission to make school fun for bored students and overwhelmed teachers alike – and he's doing it with video games.

Gillispie, the Instructional Technology Coordinator for Pender County Schools, has spearheaded a program to bring games into the classroom, but not merely as a reward. These games are used to teach subjects including writing, science, history, social studies and art – in a way that appeals to students.

Technology and video games are a huge part of students' lives, Gillispie said. "They think school is boring," he said. "At 3:15 (p.m.) they reach for their cell phones, and suddenly they have oxygen again."

As a high school science teacher and a fan of video games since Atari, Gillispie found common ground with his students. "My class became a place where they could safely geek out – talk about video games," he said. His students introduced him to multiplayer role-playing games such as *World of Warcraft*.

Playing these games sparked something in his brain. The complex skills he was trying to teach in class were all needed to master *World of Warcraft* – writing, planning, leadership and teamwork. So four years ago, Gillispie and Craig Lawson, a teacher at Cape Fear Middle School in Rocky Point, organized an after-school club devoted to gaming.

"The response was crazy," said Edith Skipper, who was school principal at the time. Students who had problems with attendance started coming to school. Club participants demonstrated more growth than their peers on End-of-Grade tests. "We've got to reach more than just these few students," she said.

In fall 2009, Lawson started teaching an eighth-grade language arts elective based on *World of Warcraft*. Using Gillispie and Lawson's curriculum, which was already aligned to the Common Core State Standards, Suffern Middle School in Suffern, NY, started a similar class at the same time.

"Kids who have no interest in writing say, 'I'll write, if I can write about my *World of Warcraft* character,'" Gillispie said.



Now principal at West Pender Middle School in Burgaw, Skipper has continued her support of the game-based classes. "I see children for the first time – middle-school students – running from recess to class," she said.

About two years ago, Gillispie added Minecraft to the game classes. A virtual world with an open-ended storyline and few rules, the game is easy to master and infinitely adaptable, he said.

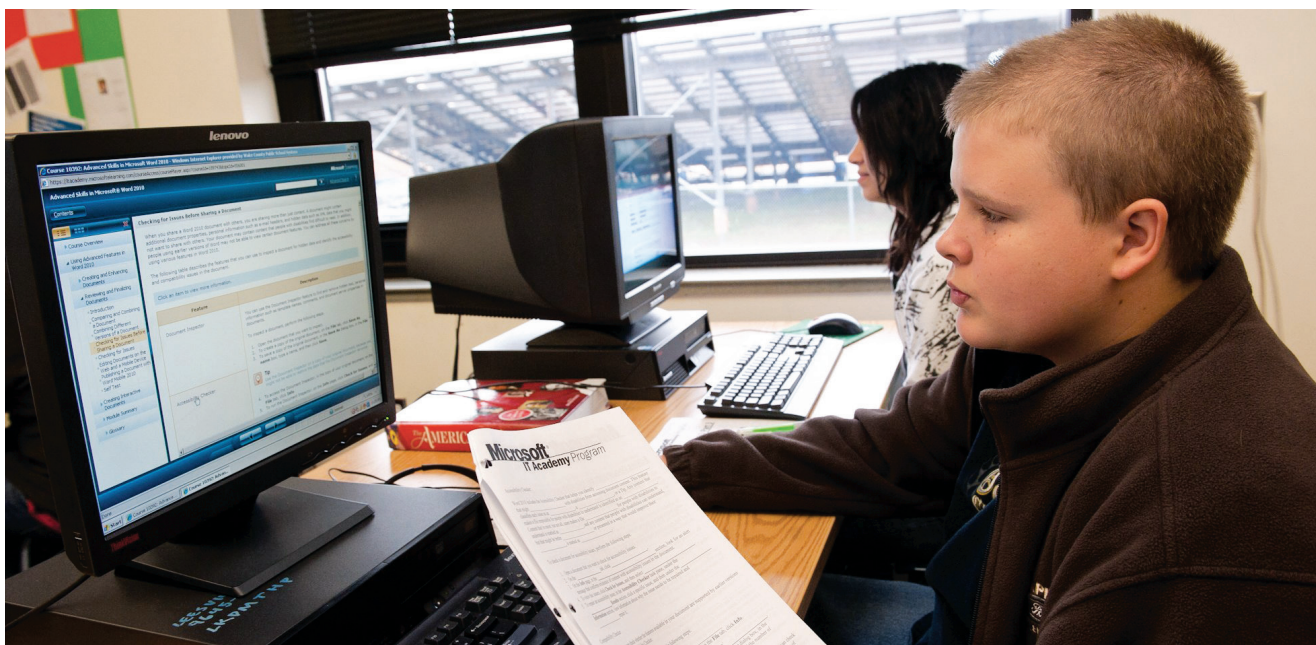
For a recent science class at West Pender Middle, teacher Sara Toothman's class used Minecraft to build roller coasters. Although traditional physics don't apply in the game world, the kids were able to explore kinetic and potential energy. "The game allowed the students to make a machine and make it move," she said.

Now that his efforts with children are going strong, Gillispie wants to get adults excited about the potential of play. His professional development sessions for teachers also use games, but to teach how to use social media and other technology.

Most adults, he said, are conditioned to separate play from work and learning. But, he said, "if you can break down that conditioning and go back to the fundamentals, you realize the value of play – that it's a powerful form of learning."

For more information about Pender County's Game program visit:

- <http://wowinschool.pbworks.com>
- <http://minecraftinschool.pbworks.com>
- <http://storyandgameacademy.pbworks.com> and
- Gillispie's personal blog is at: <http://www.edurealms.com>



Tools and Support: Data Systems to Improve Instruction

Technology plays a vital role in the modern classroom as well as in higher education and the workplace. Because of its importance in society, technology literacy is an integral part of the efforts to remodel public education in North Carolina.

The newly-adopted Common Core State Standards and Essential Standards spell out what computer skills students should have. Classes can be accessed online through the NC Virtual Public School. High-schoolers can gain proficiency in Microsoft programs and earn course credit and industry-recognized certifications through free Microsoft IT Academy courses.

In addition to helping students learn, technology will also enable North Carolina public schools to be more efficient, to improve communication and to ease access to information for students, teachers and principals.

One of the most exciting technological innovations to come out of North Carolina's READY initiative is Home BaseSM. When this system is fully implemented in 2014, this tool will enhance and energize all of the state's READY goals.

Home BaseSM, funded largely by the federal Race to the Top grant, will offer students and educators an array of software and other services that schools would have had to buy on a piecemeal basis. Content, services and applications will be on one statewide platform with one log-in for educators.

Students will be able to access homework help and other educational resources aligned to the Common Core State Standards. They will be able to take assessments and receive faster feedback. They also will be able to collect and store an online portfolio of academic and artistic work. The system will ease collaboration with other students – even those outside their class or even their country.

Through learner profiles, teachers will be able to get a clear picture of student performance. They will access shared instructional resources such as sample lesson plans and online enrichment activities that reinforce classroom learning. Shorter more focused assessments will zero in on student performance – including areas needing extra attention – leading to more targeted instruction and engaged students. Teachers also will be able to access professional development modules. Just as they do for students, these online learning tasks will provide valuable feedback that will enable teachers to improve their classroom skills.

Administrators will be able to access teacher evaluations, school-wide student data and progress reports. Professional development for school leaders and other communication tools also will be online.

Parents will be able to monitor their child's performance, attendance and discipline reports. Homework help and other appropriate educational resources will be easily accessible. Communication with teachers and administrators also will be easier.

DID YOU KNOW...

- North Carolina's 2012 high school graduation rate is 80.4%, highest in state history.
- North Carolina is ranked 36th in the nation on the SAT and 22nd in the nation on the ACT.

Home BaseSM will enable North Carolina educators to collaborate with others nationwide to leverage existing resources. North Carolina already has partnered with other states and the District of Columbia to share ideas. Other partnerships include the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, which develops assessments related to the Common Core State Standards; the Shared Learning Collaborative, which builds shared technology services; and the Home BaseSM Resource Consortium, which helps NC districts share resources among themselves.

The use of technology and Home BaseSM will enable schools to personalize education for each student.

DID YOU KNOW...

The 2011 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study showed that NC students are very competitive with students in other countries, including Korea, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Singapore, Finland and the Russian Federation.

MICROSOFT IT ACADEMY PREPARES STUDENTS FOR THE WORKPLACE

When Miranda Hill signed up for a computer class to fulfill a graduation requirement, she had no idea it would change her life.

In August 2010, Spring Creek High School in Seven Springs was part of a pilot program at select NC high schools to offer the Microsoft IT Academy – a program comprised of online courses, lesson plans and other resources to help students and teachers learn how to use the latest Microsoft software. Instead of a broad overview of computers, MSITA is an in-depth exploration of Microsoft Office. Students also can earn professional-level certification, at no cost, while still in high school.

Hill's former teacher Jennifer Tyndall was immediately excited by the real-world applications of the new curriculum. "This program has changed my life," Tyndall said. "It's opened a lot of doors for me and my students."

Hill initially was nervous about taking the class. Although she could open and print a Word document, that was about the extent of her Microsoft Office abilities. "The program was such a confidence booster and resume builder," Hill said. "Ms. Tyndall was the key for me relaxing and getting a grasp on what I was doing."

Hill quickly caught on, breezing through Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Access. She eventually became the first student at the Wayne County school to earn certification as a Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS). "I am a person who wants to be good at whatever I try," she said.

That desire made Hill a perfect candidate for the U.S. Competition on Microsoft Office sponsored by Certipoint, a company specializing in Microsoft instruction. She eventually beat more than 72,000 competitors across the country to become the U.S. champion in Microsoft Word 2010. She went on to place seventh at the Worldwide Competition in San Diego.

Until that computer class, Hill had always wanted a career in music education. "Music will always be part of my life," she said, but her future lies with computers. She is currently a sophomore at East Carolina University majoring in Business Administration with an emphasis in Managing Information Systems.



MIRANDA HILL



ALEX BAINBRIDGE

North Carolina students continued to be successful in the Microsoft U.S. and Worldwide Competitions in 2012. Five students from the state were named semi-finalists in the U.S. competition and three additional students scored well enough to compete in the World Championship held in Las Vegas this past summer. Among those finalists, Alex Bainbridge, a student at Green Hope High School in Cary, won the bronze medal for his 3rd place finish in Excel 2010. He competed with 285,000 students from 53 countries for the honor.

Helen Maness, business teacher at North Moore High School in Robbins, points out that the program gives students the skills they need to compete, not just for medals, but also for jobs. "Businesses are going to hire my students because they know they have the fundamentals," she said.

For many students, "the program has given them something at which they can be successful. It's given them a leg up," she said. "You can't take that away from them. It's industry-wide certification." She adds that many of her students are qualified for telecommunications positions upon graduation, and the certification helps them get part-time jobs.

Tyler Wallace, a graduate of North Moore and a sophomore at UNC-Chapel Hill studying business administration, was able to get a summer job at Fidelity Bank as a teller. He passed the certification tests for Word, Powerpoint and Excel.

"Just having the skills on my resume, showing them I had experience with different computer programs – it was a definite help," he said.

In August 2012, Microsoft IT Academy courses replaced the Computer Applications I course in the Career and Technical Education curriculum. In the spring of 2013, the CTE Division will partner with the North Carolina Virtual Public School to pilot a new course in Microsoft Sharepoint and Outlook.



Teachers and Leaders

Any school's success turns on the quality of its teachers and principals. They push, prod, encourage and exhort students to learn.

Because meaningful learning is fueled by great teaching, the North Carolina school system supports that success with focused professional development, innovative recruiting, insightful feedback and high expectations for teachers and principals.

Enhanced Professional Development

The robust statewide professional development system gives teachers in North Carolina the tools to stay on top of their subject.

The shift to the new *Standard Course of Study* pushed training efforts into high gear. In 2011 and 2012, every school district sent leadership teams of teachers, principals and office staff to Regional Summer Institutes. Approximately 3,000 educators attended these workshops and gained a fluent knowledge of the new content standards. Smaller sessions were also held in fall 2011 and spring 2012. Online modules also help teachers master the standards, data literacy and other learning goals.

The NCDPI also provides a wealth of information and services to help teachers integrate new education methods and meet the changing needs of students.

- A cadre of regional leaders develops programs, trains mentors, supports novice teachers, leads workshops, coaches existing educators and recruits prospective teachers.



- Online instructional resources such as webinars, videos and learning modules enable educators across the state to access high-quality professional information in an easy and cost-effective way.
- Professional learning communities within schools bring educators together so they can share knowledge, resources and better coordinate learning.

Serving the Underserved

Getting qualified educators to underserved areas in North Carolina has always been a challenge. Currently several alternative programs are in place to attract, train and keep qualified teachers and principals, particularly in the schools and districts where they are needed most.

- The North Carolina Teacher Corps (NCTC) is a Race to the Top initiative designed to recruit and develop lateral-entry teachers. This program targets successful mid-career professionals and recent graduates who may not hold education degrees. The first cohort of NCTC teachers began working in 12 districts across the state for academic year 2012-13.
- In 2012, Teach for America expanded its ranks of new teachers in North Carolina from 150 to 230. These sought-after new college graduates teach for two years in urban and rural underserved public schools.

DID YOU KNOW...

North Carolina leads the nation in the number of teachers who have earned National Board of Professional Teaching Standards certifications.

- Troops to Teachers helps eligible military personnel transition to new jobs in the classroom. Candidates receive career counseling, assistance with the state certification process and employment leads. This program's main focus is to place teachers in schools serving a high percentage of low-income families. More than 300 teachers have been employed through the program over the past two years.
- Regional Leadership Academies train aspiring principals to lead high-needs schools across



the state. The services offered include a full-time, year-long clinical residency, professional development and alternative administrative licensure. The academies serve underserved districts that have difficulty recruiting and keeping qualified school leaders. Sixty-two new principals graduated from the program in 2012.

LESLIE FETZER IS NATIONAL ONLINE TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Despite all the accolades that have come her way this year, Leslie Fetzer still just wants to connect with students and figure out the best way to teach them.

In March 2012, Fetzer, of Holly Springs, was named National Online Teacher of the Year for K-12 education. During her biology classes for NC Virtual Public School, the nine-year teaching veteran was able to excite her students with personalized lesson plans geared to their interests and their abilities.

"It helps that I've always loved puzzles," Fetzer said. She explains the lesson plans she prepares for her students as being like "finding that perfect pair of shoes for an outfit."

In July she became the Senior Research and Policy Analyst for the North Carolina Virtual Public Schools. The position involves a lot of seminars, conferences and teacher training to spread the word about NCVPS. She also teaches biology to four special-needs students, because she "didn't want to not teach anymore," she said.

That sentiment is not surprising. In August 2010, Fetzer helped launch the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) Blended Learning program. The effort, a partnership between the classroom teacher and the online teacher, provides specialized instruction to students with traumatic brain injuries, Down syndrome or other severe disabilities.

"We are like little fairies in the night," Fetzer said. During the day, the classroom teacher posts detailed information to an online message log, and overnight Fetzer creates a lesson designed specifically for that student. "In the morning when they log in, the lesson plan is right where they need it, when they need it," she said. "And it's different from (the lesson for) the person sitting next to them."

This method involves lots of communication – with the student, with the teacher and with the parents. But that personal connection is key to sparking an interest or making abstract ideas concrete. Fetzer describes how she was messaging a student: How was your weekend? Did you do

anything fun? The student replied that he had gone hunting with his brother. She seized on this morsel of information to tie in some biology vocabulary with which the student had been struggling. Did you know that the leaves on the tree where you were sitting are Producers and the deer are Consumers?

This individualized approach gets results.

Lindsey Taylor, who has taught Special Education at Ashbrook High School in Gastonia since 2009, has worked with Fetzer for about a year. After going through the OCS-Blended Learning class, one of her students scored a "3" – or proficient – on the state End-of-Course exam. "I'd never seen that before," Taylor said, clearly thrilled by her student's performance.

"Students are more engaged in class," Taylor said "Their grades are better because the information is presented to them differently."

Since winning the national award, sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board and the International Association for K-12 Online Learning, Fetzer has promoted the Blended Learning model and the possibilities it opens up for students with severe disabilities. Because of the growth she has seen in her students, she said she would love to see the program expanded.

"Imagine what we could accomplish with every student in Blended Learning," Fetzer said.

BY THE NUMBERS

Occupational Course of Study

	FALL 2010	FALL 2012
Classes Offered	3	6
Overall Enrollment	499 block 49 year-long	3,300 block 340 year-long

Educator Effectiveness

Key to professional development is knowing which skills need to be improved. A new statewide measure of the NC Educator Evaluation System provides that insight.

Teachers, whose annual evaluations began with the 2011-12 school year, must demonstrate leadership, meet the needs of diverse students, master their content, facilitate learning and reflect on their craft. Ratings in these benchmarks are distilled from a combination of self-assessment, peer ratings, observations and conversations.

In 2011, the State Board of Education added a sixth factor: effective teachers also must cultivate student growth. In 2012-13, the Board is expected

to make a final decision on how to measure that growth. As of now, student work, assessments and the EVAAS growth model – how much students advance compared to their peers – will be considered. Schools are already gathering data about student achievement, however the information will not be integrated into growth ratings until the program is fully implemented in August 2014.

Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, principals, assistant principals, superintendents, central office staff and other administrators also are assessed under the program.

SUMMER INSTITUTES REACH EDUCATORS STATEWIDE

Most of the time, the best way to take care of a thorny problem is to ask the smartest people you know how to solve it.

That's what the NCDPI did after North Carolina adopted the Common Core State Standards in June 2010 and directed school districts to implement them in the Fall of 2012. Roughly 3,000 educators from across the state met at Summer Institutes – six workshops in summer 2011 and six more in summer 2012 – to collaborate and share best practices to ease their transition to the state's new curriculum.

"We wanted to build the skills of the people in the district," said Robert Sox, professional development consultant with the NCDPI. If you just do training, then you train one cadre, one cohort of individuals. Then, he asked, what happens when those folks leave or retire?

"We wanted to bring in the drivers of the work," he said. "We wanted to say, 'Here are the key factors that will drive significant change in your district.' "

Teams from 33 charter schools and 115 school districts attended the sessions. So they could hit the ground running, online sessions prior to the Summer Institutes covered basic issues and expectations. Workshop sessions included training in specific content areas for grades K-5 or 6-12, brainstorming, group activities, and strategies to train educators back at the local school or district.

But instead of being trained on a one-size-fits-all implementation plan handed down by the NCDPI, participants were able to tailor their own strategies. Noel Grady-Smith, the executive director of curriculum leadership development with Davie County Schools, said this approach was vital for her small school district where they depend on teacher leaders. "It had to be boots on the ground with us," she said.

Participants say they most appreciated the atmosphere of free-flowing ideas.

"Any time we can get together with peers, we often learn just as much from each other than from the

presenter," said Danny Cartner, director of instructional services for Davie County Schools.

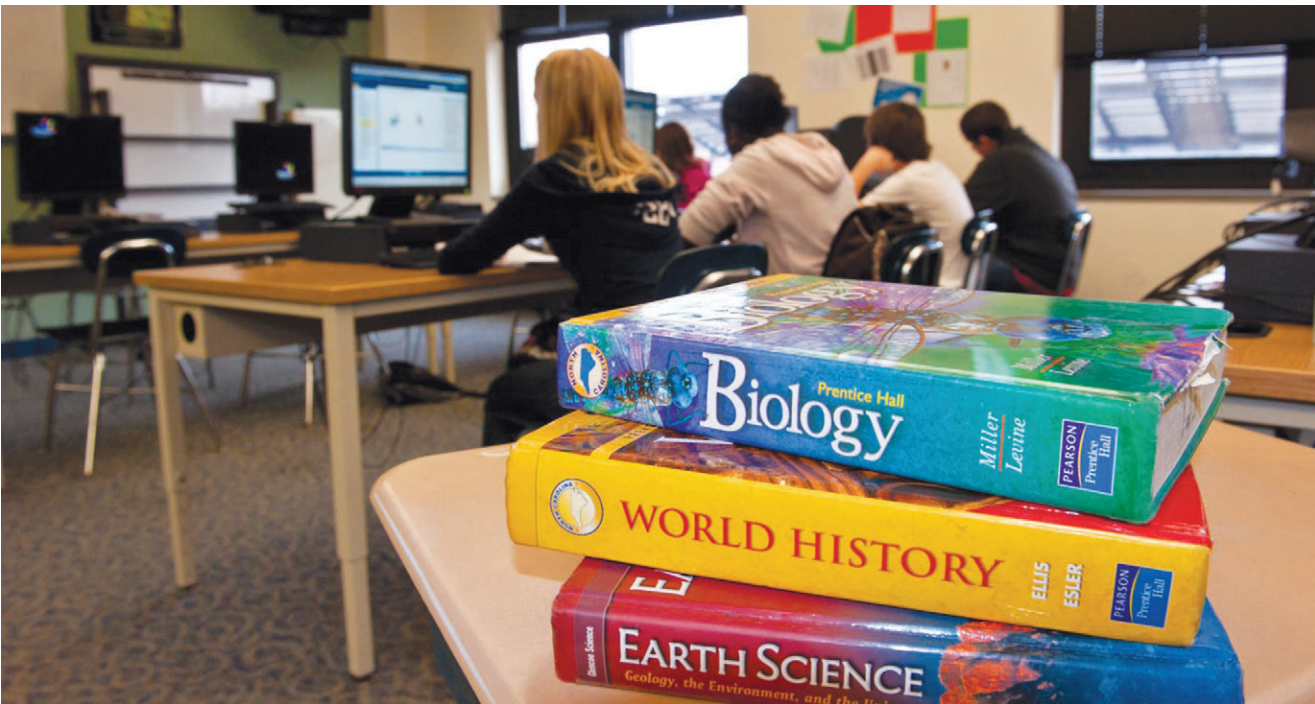
It can be hard to pick up the phone to chat with a colleague in another district during the school year, said Steven Weber, principal at Hillsborough Elementary School in Orange County. But the workshop setting encouraged participants to mingle. "There were a lot of deep conversations even at lunch... We had a lot of conversations in lunch lines or at lunch tables."

"It was comforting to see that we were out in front in some ways compared to other districts," said Grady-Smith. But gaps in their plan showed up as well. She said her district needed to set aside more concentrated time during school for teachers to meet and plan. Carving out time for high school and middle school teachers wasn't difficult. But because there are fewer electives in the early grades, "elementary was tricky," she said. "I think it will be an ongoing challenge for us because it will mean extra staffing, and that means extra funding."

Participants say they are still reaping the benefits of partnerships formed during the collaborative sessions at the Summer Institutes.

Another round of Summer Institutes is planned for 2013.





DID YOU KNOW...

North Carolinians can see the state's public school curriculum, performance data and more about public schools at www.ncpublicschools.org. Each district's school's report card is online at www.ncreportcards.org.

Access for All and Transformation Efforts

North Carolina is committed to the ideal that every child – wherever he or she lives – deserves access to a solid education. This commitment is key to the state's READY goals and its Race to the Top initiative.

Access to a good education depends on a number of factors, and therefore requires a number of solutions. Among these are: district and school transformation efforts targeting the state's lowest-achieving schools; expansion of virtual and blended teaching; a customized approach to local needs; early college high schools; magnet schools; career and technical centers; and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) schools.

District and School Transformation

The funds provided by the Race to the Top grant in 2010 allowed North Carolina to expand the successful transformation work begun in 2006. These turnaround efforts target schools in the bottom 5 percent of performance and high schools with a graduation rate below 60 percent – some 118 schools. District and School Transformation also works with local districts with aggregate performance composites below 65 percent – currently 12 districts.

Of the 118 targeted schools, 10 have closed and 88 have improved their test scores since 2009. Of the 23 schools that are high schools, 22 have improved their graduation rates. Eleven of the 12 districts have improved their performance.

Successful transformation efforts are built on clear action plans, improved school leadership, focused professional development, greater teacher involvement, broader use of data to drive decisions, accountability pressure, parent and community involvement, and coaching throughout the process.

This broad transformation model is customized to reflect local conditions and guide the schools' plan for improvement. Each struggling district is evaluated during a Comprehensive Needs Assessment to provide a clear view of its strengths, areas for improvement, challenges and successes.

Support for All Districts

The NCDPI also has made it easier for all school districts to get the help and support they need. Eight regional committees – or Roundtables – were set up in 2009-10 to ease communication between the state and district. These regional Roundtables analyze trends, aid technical assistance, monitor progress toward system goals, identify problems early on, and provide valuable feedback. A point person from each district sits at the Roundtable, looking out for local needs.

More Online Teaching

Online classes statewide also extend the reach of public education and increase students' opportunities for greater learning. The NC Virtual Public School provides access to Advanced Placement and other hard-to-find courses; gives at-risk students access to credit-recovery courses; and provides highly qualified teachers for districts that do not have them in specific subjects. The NCVPS had nearly 100,000 course enrollments in 2010-12, while enrolling more than 5,000 online students from Advanced Placement courses.

BY THE NUMBERS

NORTH CAROLINA INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS

65 Early College High Schools now open in NC

8 Early College High Schools are being planned

44 STEM-themed High Schools now open in NC



STATE TRANSFORMATION EFFORTS DRIVE POSITIVE CHANGE FOR STUDENTS

It's not unusual to find Marvin Bradley, principal at Northwest Halifax County High School, in his office on Saturday mornings answering phone calls and meeting with parents.

It's a small way that Bradley demonstrates that he is willing to do whatever it takes to make sure their children succeed in school. That attitude, found throughout the school, is one factor in its rising test scores and graduation rates. The number of students at the school scoring proficient or above on End-of-Course tests went from 36.1 percent in 2008-09 to 60 percent in 2011-12. During the same time, the school's graduation rate jumped from 57.8 to 73.9 percent.

The improved test scores "shows them what they can achieve," said Bradley of his students. "This year their chests are pumped up, and they're going to class."

Northwest, in Littleton, is not alone in its recent academic gains. At the district's other high school, Southeast Halifax, students passing End-of-Course tests went from 28.4 to 68.9 percent in three years. The school's graduation rate rose by 19.2 points. Across the district, the number of students passing End-of-Grade tests in elementary and middle school rose by 10 percent.

"Three of our schools – Southeast Halifax High, Northwest Halifax High, and William R. Davie Middle – exceeded expected growth this past school year," said Elise Frederick, Halifax County Schools superintendent. "... The academic atmosphere at each school has been improving steadily over the past three years, and we have high expectations for future gains."

The change is welcome in Halifax County where the state intervened in 2009 because of poor test scores. At the time, more than 71 percent of the district's elementary school students and more than 74 percent of its middle-schoolers

were not proficient in reading, according to state figures. At the high school level, only a third of the students passed End-of-Course tests, compared with 68 percent statewide. About 4,400 students attend 14 schools in the district.

Pat Ashley, director of the NCDPI's District and School Transformation Division, calls the changes in Halifax County a fundamental rethinking of how schools should work. Once there was a belief at many schools in the county that it was teachers' responsibility merely to present the material, and it was up to the students to learn it, she said.

"What's different now is a different approach," she said. "Now the attitude is 'You're taking Algebra I. We want you to succeed with Algebra I. We're going to do what it takes to make sure you succeed with Algebra I, ...because Algebra I is fundamental to your success in high school and fundamental to your having any opportunities beyond high school.'"

At Northwest, this change takes shape in the enrichment periods that begin each day. Principal Bradley saw that transportation was a challenge in his rural district. Dependent on the buses, students could not stay after school to get the extra tutoring they needed. So he set aside time during school hours for that help.

In addition to helping recruit new administrators and principals like Bradley, who is in his second year at Northwest, the NCDPI has provided intensive professional development and coaching at every level of the school system – from local board of education members to classroom teachers.

"I really believe we're going to see some very substantial gains at the elementary level this coming year," Ashley said. "There are a lot of fundamentally different pieces in place now that are going to result in better student outcomes."

State Superintendent's Goals and Recommendations

Each biennium, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction is charged with delivering a biennial report that summarizes the progress and needs of North Carolina's public schools. A part of this report includes recommendations that will help the state move forward in improving public school quality and performance for students. While the budget request is an important policy statement on its own, State Superintendent June Atkinson offers the following specific goals for her term and also recommendations to help move public schools forward.

GOALS

- 100 percent high school graduation rate.
- 125,000 Industry-Based Credentials earned by students while in high school.
- 90 percent of Graduates remediation-free upon entry into community colleges or universities.
- North Carolina as an International Leader in Reading and Mathematics Achievement.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Restore \$376,124,279 LEA Adjustment/Discretionary Reduction.*
- Expand opportunities for all students and educators to access digital learning devices and resources.*
- Expand learning opportunities before and after school and outside of the traditional school year.*
- Give the Department of Public Instruction the responsibility for early childhood education; expand early childhood education opportunities to all children living in poverty.*
- Increase educator salaries by 5 percent.*
- Streamline legislation requiring unnecessary work for local school districts.

* Please see budget requests for additional details on each of these items.

Budget Request for 2013-15

The State Board of Education submitted two budget requests for the 2013-15 biennium. Recognizing that the Office of State Budget and Management has set a 2 percent limit to each state agency's budget request, the State Board of Education directed the NC Department of Public Instruction to request that amount – approximately \$154 million – be used to lower the discretionary reduction that each school district and charter school is expected to absorb. The Board also approved the following budget request reflecting a more comprehensive approach that would better address the operational needs in North Carolina public schools.

STATE BOARD MISSION

The State Board of Education is charged with supervising and administering “the free public school system and the educational funds provided for its support.”

To that end, the State Board of Education's vision of a public education system builds on the state's constitutional commitment to education and emphasizes the State's responsibility for assuring a strong and coherent system that serves all students and that is geared toward the promotion of the public interest.

This document outlines the State Board's Continuation and Expansion Budget requests into groupings that reflect the above Mission and Vision. This is accomplished by grouping the Budget items into the following categories:

- **Strengthening the System of Public Education –** Recognizes the State's responsibility for instructional programs and operations of the public school system
- **Assuring Diverse and Innovative Means for Delivering Education –** Opportunities for multiple options for instruction delivery through virtual opportunities, charter schools, and other non-traditional sources
- **Specialized Supplemental Services for Targeted Populations –** Programs/services that supplement the instructional programs to assure all students receive the support to be successful and graduate from our public schools

STRENGTHENING THE SYSTEM OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

#	2013-2014	2014-2015	DESCRIPTION	* SBE PRIORITY
1	\$376,124,279	\$376,124,279	LEA Adjustment/Discretionary Reduction – Restore funding needed to ensure allotment ratios designed to provide sound basic education are fully met. Funding would restore 4,300 classroom teachers, 444 CTE teachers, and 217 instructional support personnel along with 10% classroom materials, 8% teacher assistants, etc.	
2	\$76,500,000	Continuation	Textbooks – Elimination of the non-recurring reduction to textbooks will reinstate the per student funding level to \$77.16 (up from \$15.28 for FY 2012-13).	GCS
3	\$38,417,147	Continuation	Instructional Supplies – Elimination of the non-recurring reduction to instructional supplies will reinstate the per student funding level to \$59.33 (up from \$33.60 for FY 2012-13).	GCS
4	\$14,239,181	Continuation	Additional funding for the 5 instructional days – The General Assembly required 5 additional instructional days and funded the districts that did not obtain a State Board waiver (total funded for FY 2012-13 was \$391,637). It should be noted that LEAs will have to operate school for 185 days or 1,025 hours in FY 2013-14. This change from “and” to “or” could impact the actual costs needed for the additional instructional days. Additional costs include transportation, substitute and teacher assistant costs. Transportation costs are estimated at \$10.1m. Substitute costs at \$1m. An estimated 30% of the LEAs currently employ the TAs for instructional days only, so the 5 additional days is estimated to increase the costs for these employees by \$3.1m.	TCS
5	\$73,146,548	Continuation	Guaranteed Allotments that are Underfunded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Leave • Short Term Disability • Torts • Workers Compensation • Longevity • Social Security/Retirement • Unemployment 	TCS
6	\$325,356,270	\$325,356,270	Salary – Funding to provide a 5% increase for all SPSF personnel (1% = \$52m for certified and \$13m for non-certified).	TCS
7	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	ACT (Ready, Set, Go!) – Funding for all 8th graders to take EXPLORE, all 10th graders to take PLAN, and all 11th graders to take the ACT. ACT: All public and charter school students who are enrolled in grade 11 (according to NCWISE) are required to take the ACT. Students who have a significant cognitive disability and receive instruction in the Extended Content Standards, students deemed medically fragile because of a significant medical emergency and/or condition and unable to participate in testing and, students who took the SAT or ACT prior to March 6, 2011 with scores that meet the ACT benchmark are not required to take the ACT. PLAN: All public and charter school students in grade 10 (according to NC WISE) will participate in PLAN. The same exceptions for ACT apply to PLAN. EXPLORE: All public and charter school students in grade 8 (according to NC WISE) will participate in EXPLORE. The same exceptions for ACT apply to EXPLORE. WORKKEYS: All public school students who are enrolled in Grade 12 (according to NC WISE) and are identified in NC WISE as Career and Technical Education (CTE) concentrators are required to complete WorkKeys assessments. The same exceptions apply; but, with the addition of students who previously took WorkKeys assessments and achieved a CRC issued at the Silver, Gold, or Platinum level. These students may also be excluded.	GCS
8	\$60,000,000	\$60,000,000	Classroom Technology – Estimated funding to accommodate technology needs in our public schools during implementation of the Instructional Improvement System. Technology needs include, handheld devices, digital content, network infrastructure, or technology facilitators in the school building.	TCS
9	2,800,000	\$5,600,000	NC Teacher Corps – Funding to expand the North Carolina Teacher Corp program (currently supported by Race to the Top) to include 400 scholarships for teacher candidates (\$7,000 each) and enriching professional development opportunities.	TCP
10	\$29,044,008	\$29,044,008	Mentors for Teachers – Funding to provide one mentor for every 25 classroom teachers and instructional support personnel based on the 2011-12 year's teachers with 0 to 2 years experience and instructional support with 0 to 1 year of experience.	TCP
11	\$23,315,825	\$23,315,825	Assistant Principals – Funding to reduce the assistant principal to students ratio from 1:98.53 to 1:80.	TCP
12	\$59,219,666	\$59,219,666	Planning Time for Teachers – Funding to provide planning times for teachers in grades K-5. Based on decreasing the allotment ratio in grades K-5 by .5 to generate additional teaching positions to be used to assure all teachers in K-5 have a free period. This reflects an additional 1,054.5 teaching positions.	TCP

13	\$4,484,436	\$4,484,436	Mentor Program for Principals – Funding to implement a regionally-based mentor program for principals. (793 principals with < 3 years of experience; ratio 1:15 = 53 positions).	TCP
14	\$1,038,500	\$1,038,500	Training for Lateral Entry Teachers – Funding to support course attainment by lateral entry teacher. (2,077 lateral entry teachers; 2 courses per year @ \$250 per course).	TCP
15	\$100,851	\$443,708	Licensure – Provide funding to supplement receipts to support operation of new teacher licensure system.	TCS
16	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	HRMS – Modernize the Human Resource Management System to interface with other updated systems, e.g., Licensure.	TCS
17	\$-	\$750,000	Kindergarten Entry Assessment – Funding for Kindergarten Entry Assessment for all entering kindergarten students beginning FY 14-15.	GCS
18	\$-	\$754,588	Kindergarten Developmental Screening – Funding for Kindergarten developmental screening of early language, literacy, and math skills.	GCS

ASSURING DIVERSE AND INNOVATIVE MEANS FOR DELIVERING EDUCATION

#	2013-2014	2014-2015	DESCRIPTION	* SBE PRIORITY
1	\$23,000,000	Continuation	Transportation – Estimated Fuel Shortage – As of mid-September, the school year to date average fuel cost is \$3.39 per gallon. Funded at \$2.51 per gallon and based on statewide usage of 27 million gallons, the projected shortfall for the year is about \$23m if this pricing continues.	TCS
2	\$20,000,000	Continuation	School Buses – Restore the non-recurring reduction to the school bus replacement program. Restores funding to \$56,851,619.	TCS
3	\$989,454	\$991,072	Additional NCVPS Staff and Operational Funding – Funding to provide support for quality assurance processes and teacher effectiveness among its teaching staff. Positions requested include 2 Education Consultants, 1 Administrative Assistant, 1 Personnel Analyst, and 2 IT analysts. Funding is also needed for evaluation, course development, educational video streaming and supplies.	TCS
4	\$320,000	\$320,000	Additional Charter Schools Staff – Funding to increase the number of Charter School consultants at the Department and to provide funding for the Charter School Advisory Council to conduct the business of reading and reviewing charter applications. With the cap for Charter Schools being lifted, additional consultants are needed for oversight. The national average for consultants to charter schools is 1 for every 9. North Carolina is far behind that rate with only 3 consultants to work with 108 charter schools (1 consultant for every 36 schools). Approximately \$290,000 is needed for the consultants and their related travel and technology costs and approximately \$30,000 is needed annually for the expenses related to the Charter School Advisory Council.	TCS

SPECIALIZED SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICES FOR TARGETED POPULATIONS

#	2013-2014	2014-2015	DESCRIPTION	* SBE PRIORITY
1	\$61,145,280	\$61,145,280	Nurses – Funding for an additional 960 nursing positions to achieve the ratio of one nurse to every 750 students as recommended by the National Association of School Nurses.	HRS
2	\$20,032,740	\$20,032,740	Child Nutrition – Funding to support the implementation of nutrition standards in the Child Nutrition Program. Provide support to individual schools' lunch programs which are partially funded from meal charges to students, federal funds for eligible students and local supplements which will ensure that students will perform better in school, have fewer absences and be healthier overall thus contributing to higher graduation rates and reduced healthcare costs for NC.	HRS
3	\$69,788,255	\$69,788,255	Exceptional Children – Funding for PreK-12 students to approach 230% of regular student funding. Total cost \$279m. Request for 25% of target funding.	GCS

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EDUCATION ENTITIES SUPPORTED BY DPI

#	2013-2014	2014-2015	DESCRIPTION	* SBE PRIORITY
1	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	NCCAT – Restore funding to the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching.	TCS
2	\$413,904	\$337,754	ENCSD – Funding for a new summer school initiative for the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf. First, venue for the North Carolina School of Science and Math to host a six week residential program (one session-housing 100 students). Second, per NCDPI's vision, a deaf immersion program (three sessions, each for two weeks-each housing 50 students) for hearing impaired students. Funding will also be used to replace old, worn, unsafe and damaged dorm furniture at the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf. The current replacement needs includes: 68 of each of the following: beds, wardrobes with 3-drawer chest inserts, student desks and chairs.	GCS
3	\$274,538	\$238,538	Career Technical Education Program for NCSD – Funding for a Career Technical Education Program to students at The North Carolina School for the Deaf in Morganton. This funding will add four qualified CTE Teachers: one for printing, graphic arts and graphic media; one for science technology engineering and math (STEM); one for architectural, construction, and wood shop; and one for automotive and transportation.	TCS
4	\$318,073	\$506,068	Technology Funding for Governors Morehead School (GMS) – Funding to support one Instructional Technology support position as well as low vision and Braille technology, tablet technology, SMART board purchase, and computer/laptop technology replacement at The Governor Morehead School.	TCS
5	\$858,000	\$-	Safety Equipment for GMS and ENCSD – Funding to purchase safety equipment for the Governor Morehead School and the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf. GMS will purchase a campus-wide phone system that includes an auto-dialing system that will send messages immediately to the police or fire department in case of emergencies, card-key access system for campus buildings and update to the current fire alarm system, a campus-wide siren that will enable us to notify all students and staff in case of emergency such as tornado and other severe emergencies, and voice-activated electronic lobby guard installed at Lineberry. At ENCSD, the school also needs to restrict access to the campus by establishing a fence and guard house at the entrance to the school with Lobby Guard installed.	HRS
6	\$436,244	\$436,244	GMP and EI/DHH – Funding to increase working months for Governor Morehead Preschool (GMP) and Early Intervention/Deaf Hard of Hearing (EI/DHH) staff positions from 10 or 11 months to 12 months to meet federal mandate for year around services. Funding will also support a technology "renewal cycle". The request is based on a five-year replacement plan that refreshes laptops, printers, and toner cartridges.	GCS

2013-2014	2014-2015	DESCRIPTION
\$245,291,207		Total Continuation
\$1,169,536,580	\$1,187,084,307	Total Expansion
\$1,414,827,787	\$1,187,084,307	Total Budget Request

*** SBE PRIORITY:**

- **GCS** – NC Public Schools will Produce Globally Competitive Students.
- **TCS** – NC Public Schools will be Governed and Supported by 21st Century Systems.
- **TCP** – NC Public Schools will be Led by 21st Century Professionals.
- **HRS** – NC Public School Students will be Healthy and Responsible.
- **LFI** – Leadership will Guide Innovation in NC Public Schools.

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